

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 03925 211445Z

62

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-02 COME-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-07

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R 211400Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7647

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 3925

E.OM 11652: N/A

TAGSC ETRA, IN

SUBJECTC ARBITRATION DISPUTE

REF: NEW DELHI 2981

1. FIRST ROUND OF HEARINGS ON SECOND ARBITRATION CASE WAS COMPLETED MARCH 20 AND BRIDGELAND LEFT INDIA MARCH 21. BRIDGELAND BELIEVES HEARINGS WENT VERY WELL FOR HIM AND THAT THIS HAS INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON FCI TO ACCEPT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

2. AFTER CONSIDERABLE INDIRECT PROMPTING BY EMBASSY FCI FINALLY CAME FORWARD WITH ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT OFFER - A MUTUAL ABANDONMENT OF CLAIMS IN BOTH CASES. BRIDGELAND COUNTERED WITH A SETTLEMENT OFFER TO ACCEPT CERTAIN FCI CLAIMS WHICH WOULD BE DEDUCTED FROM THE FIRST SWARD. NET RESULT WOULD BE PAYMENT OF \$230,000 TO US FIRM. FCI CONSIDERING THIS SUGGESTION AND WILL REPLY IN A FEW WEEKS.

3. OUR SOURCES TELL US THAT THE SIDES ARE STILL SOME DISTANCE AWAY FROM A SETTLEMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE DIALOGUE HAS BEGUN AFTER THREE BARREN YEARS OF NO REAL NEGOTIATION.

4. WE THINK BRIDGELAND AGREEW WITH US THAT THERE HAS BEEN MOVEMENT AND HIS PROBLEMS ARE WITH THE FCI AND NOT THE GOI. PROBLEMS ESSENTIALLY INVOLVE DESIRE OF FCI TO

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NEGOTIATE SETTLEMENT THAT IT CAN DEFEND BEFORE PARLIAMENTARY

COMMITTEES.

5. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO URGE FCI TO COME FORWARD WITH
COUNTERPROPOSAL AND WE HAVE OFFERED TO PLAY COMMUNICATIONS
ROLE IF THIS HELPFUL.
SAXBE

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